



Red River Watershed Management Board

Board of Managers

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RED RIVER WATERSHED MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING August 17, 2010 Courtyard by Marriott & Conf. Center, Moorhead, Minnesota

The RRWMB met on Tuesday, August 17, 2010 at the Courtyard by Marriott & Conf. Center, Moorhead, Minnesota.

In the absence of the President, Orville Knott-Vice President called the meeting to order.

Members present were:

Rob Sando	Roger Anderson
Ron Osowski	Daniel Wilkens
Greg Holmvik	Jerome Deal

Others present were:

- Naomi Erickson, Administrator
- Ron Harnack, Project Coordinator
- Dan Thul, Red River Coordinator
- Mark Meister, CR*CS
- Myron Jesme, Administrator, Red Lake WD
- Julie Goehring, South Basin Mgr/Communications Coordinator, RRBC
- Nick Drees, Administrator, Middle Snake Tamarac Rivers WD
- Lance Yohe, Executive Director, RRBC
- Jim Ziegler, Unit Supervisor-MPCA
- Paul Wannarka, MNDNR Red River Basin Coordinator
- Joe Belford, Ramsey County Commissioner
- Valerie Gravseth, Senator Franken's office
- Chuck Fritz, Director, International Water Institute
- Ron Adrian, Engineer, Houston Engineering, Inc.
- Jon Roeschlein, Administrator, Bois de Sioux WD
- Wallace Sparby, Congressman Peterson's office
- Diane Ista, Wild Rice WD

Motion by Manager Deal to approve the minutes as written with minor corrections, **Seconded** by Manager Wilkens, **Carried**.

The Treasurer's report was presented and it was approved as read. **Motion** by Manager Deal to approve the Treasurer's Report, **Seconded** by Manager Sando, **Carried**. A one-page handout of monthly bills to be approved was distributed. **Motion** to approve and pay bills by Manager Osowski,

Seconded by Manager Anderson, **Carried**. For further reference, copies of the bills approved are attached hereto in the Treasurer's Report.

Public Information Initiative

M. Meister reviewed the public information monthly report. Activities for the month of August included writing a feature article and distributing a press release as well as attending flood meetings in the Fargo-Moorhead area related to the impacts of a diversion on downstream communities.

Planning continues with Congressman Peterson's office for a press conference and/or signing ceremony regarding the Joint Powers Agreement between the RRWMB and the RRJWRB. A press kit for distribution at the signing ceremony will be developed in addition to retaining on-site coverage for the event by KFGO.

Project Coordinator Report

R. Harnack reviewed the Project Coordinator Report. Regarding the task force established by Congressman Peterson's office to review existing federal programs to facilitate the implementation of flood water storage projects, he contacted several agencies to determine their interest in participating in storage initiatives. He stated that although the agencies were interested in participating in flood damage reduction efforts, they had reservations as far as funding sources and also relative to the current programs that could be reduced to provide funding for new initiatives.

R. Harnack reported that he attended a meeting with Don Baloun, Minnesota NRCS State Conservationist, to discuss both short-term and long-term funding options. Harnack suggested including watershed engineers and individual project teams in the development of storage initiatives. A minimum of 60% federal funding is needed in addition to streamlining existing programs in the short-term (2010-2012). Payment rates could be adjusted to allow them to be more competitive with actual and rental land values. As a starting point, Harnack offered to obtain recent land appraisals from current projects.

R. Harnack stated that he attended a meeting with Jon Roeschlein, Charlie Anderson, Kent Lokkesmoe and Pat Lynch to review the state funding percentage for the Redpath Project. Following discussion, Mr. Lokkesmoe and Mr. Lynch agreed that the state percentage would be 75/25 for the flood damage reduction and natural resource enhancement components of the project. A need for the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group to develop specific criteria to determine how a project would qualify for 75/25 state funding vs. 50/50 state funding was discussed.

Administrator Report

A) Email Marketing Service

N. Erickson reported that an email marketing service has been implemented as authorized at the previous monthly meeting. The service will provide for an email newsletter to be forwarded via email to those individuals subscribing on the board's website – www.rrwmb.org.

B) Reallocation of Surplus FY10 Funds by Funding Committee

N. Erickson reported that in fiscal year 2010, the Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group (the “Work Group”) allocated \$7,500 to each category of Alternatives Analysis and Administrative expenses for a combined budget allocation of \$15,000 per project team for FY10.

Upon review of unexpended funds for FY10, the Funding Committee of the Work Group requested that watershed district administrators forward a summary of *all* project team expenses incurred during FY10, including those already submitted for reimbursement as it appeared that a surplus of funds would be available to potentially reimburse watershed districts for project team expenses in addition to the original FY10 allocation of \$15,000.

The Work Group authorized the Funding Committee to reallocate the surplus of mediation funds for FY10. The surplus of funding (\$275,000 - \$139,480.40 = \$135,519.60) was reallocated to the individual Project Teams as follows:

Watershed District	Alt. Analysis	Support	Totals
BdSWD	51,882.93	0	51,882.93
BRRWD	28,869.85	6,998.64	35,868.49
MSTRWD	20,486.99	2,656.03	23,143.02
RLWD	4,495.23	2,211.85	6,707.08
RRWD	115.99	0	115.99
SHRWD	11,719.95	534.82	12,254.77
TRWD	5,547.33	0	5,547.33
Totals			135,519.61

C) Proposed Fargo-Moorhead Red River Diversion Project

N. Erickson distributed a response letter outlining the board’s position on the aforementioned project developed by herself and M. Meister. Following discussion, the board authorized N. Erickson to distribute the correspondence to the individuals, townships and municipalities who forwarded letters of opposition to the board regarding the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Red River Diversion project.

The Board of Managers also directed M. Meister to develop a press release specifically stating that the system designed to protect Fargo-Moorhead should in no way threaten the downstream communities and the agricultural and social interests of these communities.

D) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Draft Feasibility Report

N. Erickson stated that she was directed at the previous monthly meeting to finalize the comments developed by the TAC on the above-referenced report with regard to the Fargo-Moorhead Red River Diversion project. A handout was distributed.

E) Upcoming Meetings/Conferences

1. **Red River Basin Flood Damage Reduction Work Group**, Wednesday, August 18, 2010, Red Lake WD office, Thief River Falls, MN.
2. **Red River Basin Commission Board Meeting**, Thursday, September 2, 2010.

Red River Basin Commission

Lance Yohe, Executive Director – RRBC, distributed a handout on the *Long Term Flood Solutions (LTFS) Project*. The technical sub-committee met on August 16, 2010 and discussed the 1997 and 2009 floods, discharge/frequency and the full period of record data versus the recent wet cycle, a process for screening alternatives, evaluation criteria for options and strategies, and the list of options/strategies/and alternatives. A working group to further discuss and bring back recommendations at the next meeting on September 20, 2010 was established.

The Minnesota and North Dakota watershed districts and boards are in the process of modeling storage potential in their jurisdictional areas. Following the completion of this modeling effort, the information will be entered into the MIKE 11 model to address the base flow goals. This information will also assist in the development of the LTFS report in the development of criteria for water retention site selection, review of flood damage reduction goals, development of stage storage discharge relationships for potential sites, and the identification of potential storage sites similar to the 26 sites already identified in the Bois de Sioux WD. When all projects are constructed, it will result in that watershed meeting their basin-wide 20 percent mainstem flow reduction targeted goal.

Yohe reported that the RRBC has been assisting the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) with the development of language and program criteria for the next U.S. Farm Bill. The task force developed under Congressman Peterson's directive is scheduled to conduct their first meeting on September 2, 2010.

M. Meister inquired whether the RRBC has released a public statement commenting on the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Red River Diversion project. Yohe responded that the RRBC was charged by the Metro Flood Study Work Group to gather information and develop an inventory of community flood protection needs relative to downstream impacts from the proposed diversion.

Ms. Gravseth referred to the potential funding allocated in the next Farm Bill and noted that the funds aren't available until a specific project is authorized.

Diane Ista stated that the Red River Diversion Downstream Impact Group has retained legal counsel to develop a Joint Powers Agreement to be forwarded to all cities and counties in Minnesota and North Dakota who are or would be adversely affected by the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Diversion project.

Red River Coordinator/TAC Report

Thul stated that the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met this month and discussed the Red Lake WD's Thief River Falls Diversion/Project No. 171A Project. This is a flood damage reduction project that consists of a diversion channel to Pennington County Ditch No. 1 which clearly has only local flood damage reduction benefits.

Thul added that according to Nate Dalager, the diverted drainage area is about 4 square miles, compared to the receiving watercourse (Red Lake River) which has a drainage area of over 4,000 square miles at this location. The TAC concluded that impacts/benefits to the basin appear to be negligible, however, the project does not meet the general criteria for board cost share funding. The TAC acknowledges that the District is not asking for cost share funding, but finds it difficult to make a

recommendation for a letter of support to the MDNR in light of recent comments submitted on the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Diversion project.

M. Jesme responded that the Red Lake WD would be requesting funding assistance towards the diversion portion of the project from the MDNR whether or not a letter of support is forwarded from the RRWMB. Harnack stated that this project should be considered independently of the proposed Fargo-Moorhead Diversion project and added that it furthers the goals of the mediation agreement.

Motion by Manager Deal to authorize the letter of support to the MDNR regarding the District's request for funding assistance towards the diversion portion of the project, **Seconded** by Manager Sando, **Carried**.

Thul reported that a meeting is scheduled for August 23, 2010 at Houston Engineering, Inc. to discuss updating the Project Management Plan (PMP) for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Watershed Feasibility Study (WFS). He also noted that Nan Bischoff-USACE replaces Aaron Snyder as Project Manager for the USACE WFS.

Water Quality Project Monitoring Report

Discussions are proceeding with Minnesota and North Dakota Extension programs regarding the possibility of a joint MN/ND/IWI Area Watershed Specialist to assist with fulfillment of the Minnesota Legislative River Watch initiative and watershed education mission in general in the Red River Basin.

District Reports

- The Roseau River WD reported on the Hay Creek/Norland Project. The Spruce Valley Corporation has begun Phase 2 construction (impoundment and inlet structures). The weather has been cooperative so far with the outlet structures nearing completion.

The District continues planning for two new ring dikes through EQIP and the rural ring dike programs with construction planned for this year. Estimates for both dikes are ~ \$120,000 - \$130,000 for each dike. A completion date of November 15th is anticipated for both dikes.

- The Bois de Sioux WD reported on the Tiger Grant proposal for the Upper Mustinka Transportation Improvements Project. Grant County has taken the lead on the development of this project. The District is a partner in the project and will discuss their potential financial commitment as well as additional funding sources at their next board meeting. This project is a prime example of using the road network over a river valley to meter the flows of large flood events while keeping the roadways open for travel.

Devils Lake Update

Joe Belford, Ramsey County Commissioner, reported on the status of Devils Lake. He distributed a DVD titled *The Demise of a Community*, referencing Churchs Ferry, ND.

The original outlet pumps were designed for a maximum operating capacity of 100 cubic feet per second (cfs). Modifications constructed in early 2010 increased that capacity to 250 cfs. At its current elevation, Devils Lake is at 1,452 feet above mean sea level (amsl).

A task force has been developed to discuss Devils Lake flooding with North Dakota officials planning to travel to Washington D.C. on September 3, 2010.

District's Funding Requests

1. Bois de Sioux WD / Tiger Grant - Upper Mustinka Corridor / Step I Submittal

Manager Deal discussed a letter of support forwarded from the board to the Grant County Highway Department in September of 2009 regarding a grant application submitted by the Bois de Sioux WD. The original grant application was for funding assistance to modify 25 roadway crossings along the upper reaches of the Mustinka River by raising roads and installing culverts. Unfortunately, the application was not approved.

Jon Roeschlein explained that additional grant funding has become available and the District plans to submit another request to construct the previously identified project. He requested another letter of support from the board to be submitted in conjunction with the grant application.

Manager Deal requested the Board of Managers to consider partnering in this collaborative effort by authorizing \$500,000 towards project implementation contingent upon approval of the grant application. **Motion** by Manager Deal to accept a Step I Submittal for the Upper Mustinka Corridor Project and authorize a funding commitment of up to \$500,000 contingent upon approval of the grant application, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

2. Bois de Sioux WD / Redpath Project

Jon Roeschlein explained that the original RRWMB commitment authorized in the Step I submittal was \$2,175,000 on November 18, 2008. On June 16, 2009, the board authorized the reallocation of \$1,000,000 previously authorized for the local share of natural resource enhancements for the North Ottawa Project and also an additional \$750,000 to be used towards land acquisition for the Redpath Project for a total of \$1.75 million required to match state funding.

Jon Roeschlein requested the Board of Managers to consider an additional funding commitment of \$375,000 to increase the board's cost-share to \$3,300,000. **Motion** by Manager Deal to authorize an additional \$375,000 cost-share funding for the Redpath Project, **Seconded** by Manager Osowski, **Carried**.

The next meeting will be on September 21, 2010, at 9:30 a.m. at the Red Lake Watershed District, Thief River Falls, Minnesota.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by acclamation at 12:15 p.m. following lunch.

Respectfully submitted,

Jerome Deal
Secretary

Naomi L. Erickson
Administrator